



# Agentivism: A Learning Theory for the Age of Artificial Intelligence

## Professor Lixiang Yan

School of Education  
Tsinghua University



**July 8, 2026 (Wednesday)**

**12:45 - 14:00**

**Room 411-412, Meng Wah Complex, HKU**

**Chair: Professor Nancy Law**



Registration

### **Abstract:**

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence into education challenges long-standing assumptions about how learning occurs and how educational success should be evaluated. Traditional learning theories were developed in contexts where knowledge acquisition and task completion were primarily human-driven. However, learners increasingly work alongside AI systems that can generate content, solve problems, and perform complex cognitive tasks. This seminar introduces Agentivism, a learning theory that conceptualises learning as the development of human agency in environments where cognitive work can be delegated to artificial agents. The seminar will discuss the distinction between performance and learning, examine how AI reshapes processes of knowledge construction and skill development, and propose key mechanisms including delegation, verification, reconstructive internalisation, and transfer under reduced support. Implications for teaching, assessment, and future educational research will also be discussed.

### **About the speaker:**

Lixiang Yan is an Assistant Professor at the Institute for AI and Education, School of Education, Tsinghua University, and a recipient of the NSFC Excellent Young Scientists Fund Program (Overseas). His research focuses on artificial intelligence in education, learning analytics, human-AI collaboration, AI literacy, and learning theory in the age of AI. His work has been published in leading journals including *Nature Human Behaviour*, *Nature Reviews Psychology*, *Computers & Education*, and *British Journal of Educational Technology*. He currently leads research on Agentic AI, AI literacy assessment, human-AI collaborative learning, and Agentivism, a proposed learning theory for AI-mediated learning environments.

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For enquiries, please contact the Office of Research, Faculty of Education at [hkchow@hku.hk](mailto:hkchow@hku.hk)